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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2414  
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 002150

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/LOGERFO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/26/2016  
TAGS: KPAL KWBG PREL IS ASEC CASC

SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTRY PULLS BACK SOME OF ITS FORCES;  
CLASHES CONTINUE IN GAZA

REF: JERUSALEM 02134

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

**¶11. (C) SUMMARY:** The PA Interior Ministry scaled back its deployment of the HAMAS-affiliated Special Security Force in Gaza on May 26. The HAMAS commander of the force, Yusif al-Zahar, told the media that the move is intended to reduce tensions in Gaza, while noting that the Interior Minister expected a reciprocal move by Fatah-affiliated forces. Al-Zahar added that the HAMAS-affiliated militants, who make up the Special Security Force, will be deployed again once details have been finalized on their integration into the PA Civil Police. At least 18 people were injured in Gaza City on May 25 in two separate exchanges of fire between HAMAS militants and officers from Preventive Security Organization (PSO) and the Presidential Guard. END SUMMARY.

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Interior Minister Orders  
Forces To Stand Down  
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**¶12. (C)** Interior Minister Said Siyyam on May 26 ordered the HAMAS-affiliated Special Security Forces to reduce their deployment and cease foot patrols in most areas of Gaza. Presidential Guard sources reported that Interior Ministry forces are still deployed at major intersections in Gaza and performing foot patrols in several areas of Gaza City, but the number of HAMAS-affiliated men on the streets has been reduced substantially.

**¶13. (SBU)** The commander of the Special Security Force, Yusif al-Zahar, told the media on May 26 that the Interior Minister had given the order to reduce the deployment to help ease tensions in Gaza, and noted that the Interior Minister expected Fatah to reciprocate in kind. Al-Zahar added that many of the Special Security Force members (HAMAS and PRC affiliated militants) will be deployed again once they have been integrated into the Civil Police and issued new uniforms (reftel). Al-Zahar said he expected this to occur soon.

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Clashes Continue  
In Gaza City  
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**¶14. (C)** At least 18 people were injured in Gaza City on May 25 in two separate exchanges of fire between HAMAS militants and officers from Preventive Security (PSO) and the Presidential Guard. The heaviest fighting broke out on Thalathini Street in Gaza City a short while after the National Dialogue had convened. According to sources in President's Gaza City office, the fighting began when several PSO officers opened

fire on a patrol of HAMAS-affiliated forces. FSNI in Gaza reported that 10 PSO officers, 3 civilians, and two HAMAS militiamen were wounded in the subsequent fighting. During the fighting, the HAMAS forces reportedly fired RPGs.

¶5. (C) In a separate incident, clashes broke out in Gaza City on May 25 between officers from the Presidential Guard and HAMAS militants. President,s office officials reported that 3 members of the Presidential Guard were injured in the incident.

WALLES